



UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE
United States Patent and Trademark Office
Address: COMMISSIONER FOR PATENTS
P.O. Box 1450
Alexandria, Virginia 22313-1450
www.uspto.gov

APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
10/663,064	09/16/2003	Zaki A. Khan	ES9121.006	2049
44093 7590 06/15/2009 ELEY LAW FIRM CO. 7870 OLENTANGY RIVER RD SUITE 311 COLUMBUS, OH 43235				
EXAMINER				
IDELL, JOSEPH T				
ART UNIT		PAPER NUMBER		
3636				
MAIL DATE		DELIVERY MODE		
06/15/2009		PAPER		

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

The time period for reply, if any, is set in the attached communication.

Office Action Summary

Application No.

10/663,064

Applicant(s)

KHAN ET AL.

Examiner

JOSEPH F. EDELL

Art Unit

3636

Period for Reply -- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) OR THIRTY (30) DAYS, WHICHEVER IS LONGER, FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 26 May 2009.
- 2a) ☐ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-4, 6-15 and 20 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1-4, 6-15 and 20 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☒ The drawing(s) filed on 26 May 2009 is/are: a) ☒ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
- Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
- Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
1. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
 3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- 1) ☒ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
- 2) ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
- 3) ☒ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO/SF/08)
- Paper No(s)/Mail Date 05/26/09.
- 4) ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413)
- Paper No(s)/Mail Date _____.
- 5) ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application
- 6) ☐ Other: _____

DETAILED ACTION

Continued Examination Under 37 CFR 1.114

A request for continued examination under 37 CFR 1.114, including the fee set forth in 37 CFR 1.17(e), was filed in this application after final rejection. Since this application is eligible for continued examination under 37 CFR 1.114, and the fee set forth in 37 CFR 1.17(e) has been timely paid, the finality of the previous Office action has been withdrawn pursuant to 37 CFR 1.114. Applicant's submission filed on 26 May 2009 has been entered.

Drawings

The drawings were received on 26 May 2009. These drawings are acceptable.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 112

The following is a quotation of the first paragraph of 35 U.S.C. 112:

The specification shall contain a written description of the invention, and of the manner and process of making and using it, in such full, clear, concise, and exact terms as to enable any person skilled in the art to which it pertains, or with which it is most nearly connected, to make and use the same and shall set forth the best mode contemplated by the inventor of carrying out his invention.

Claims 1-4, 6-15, and 20 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, first paragraph, as failing to comply with the enablement requirement. The claim(s) contains subject matter which was not described in the specification in such a way as to enable one skilled in the art to which it pertains, or with which it is most nearly connected, to make and/or use the invention. With respect to claims 1 and 20, each claim sets forth that the forward support leg "automatically folds into the stowed position" and "automatically unfolds into

the extended position.” However, the specification does not describe the structural element or elements necessary to cause the automatic folding and unfolding of the forward support leg in such a way as to enable one of ordinary skill in the art to make the claimed foldable seat.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102

The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

A person shall be entitled to a patent unless –

(b) the invention was patented or described in a printed publication in this or a foreign country or in public use or on sale in this country, more than one year prior to the date of application for patent in the United States.

Claims 1-3, 6, 7, 12, and 20, as best understood, are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by JP Publication No. 406234337 to Kuroiwa et al.

Kuroiwa et al. disclose a foldable seat that includes all the limitations recited in claims 1-3, 6, 7, 12, and 20, as best understood. Kuroiwa et al. show a seat having an anchor member 5,6 (see Figs. 1-3) connected to a structural portion 8 of a vehicle, a seat cushion 2 including an enclosure 15 defined by a pair of opposing side portions, opposing forward and rearward portions extending between the side portions, a top portion coupled to the side, forward, and rearward portions, and a bottom portion 16, a forward support leg pivotably 4 coupled to the bottom portion of the seat proximate the forward portion, the forward support leg being movable between a stowed position generally parallel with the bottom portion and within the enclosure and an extended position generally perpendicular to the seat cushion and engaging the structural portion,

and a seatback 3 with an upper portion and a lower portion proximate the rearward portion of the seat cushion wherein the rearward portion of the seat cushion being connected to the anchor member and pivotable about the anchor member, the forward support leg automatically folds into the stowed position when the seat cushion is pivoted upward by pulling (on belt 21 to latch part 24 in Fig. 3 or arm 38 in Fig. 7), the forward support leg automatically unfolds into the extended position when the seat cushion is pivoted downwardly (by gas spring 19 in Fig. 3 or arm 38 in Fig. 7), the seat cushion is upwardly pivotable to a generally vertical position proximate and facially adjacent the seatback, and the seatback is downwardly pivotable to a generally horizontal position proximate and facially adjacent the seat cushion.

With respect to claims 6, 7, and 20, the seat cushion is releasably retained in either a first generally horizontal position or a second generally vertical position by a latch 11 and the latch may be actuated by a lever 13 to release the latch to allow the seat cushion to be pivoted about the rearward portion.

With respect to claim 12, the seat cushion provides a visual indication when not in a retained condition by virtue of the lever 13 being rotated upwardly against the seat cushion.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the

invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

Claims 4, 8, and 9, as best understood, are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Kuroiwa et al. in view of U.S. Patent No. 55,707,103 to Balk.

Kuroiwa et al. disclose a seat that is basically the same as that recited in claims 4, 8, and 9 except that the seat lacks a headrest and a second latch, as recited in the claims. Balk shows a seat similar to that of Kuroiwa et al. wherein the seat has a seat cushion 12 (see Fig. 1), a seatback 14 releasably retained, a headrest coupled to the upper portion of the seatback, a second latch (see column 3, lines 52-62), and a second lever 62 actuating the second latch such that the seatback is downwardly pivotable to a generally horizontal position proximate and facially adjacent the seat cushion. Therefore, it would have been obvious to one having ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to modify the seat of Kuroiwa et al. to include a headrest coupled to the upper portion of the seatback wherein the seat member is a seat cushion, the seatback is releasably retained in at least one position by a second latch and a second lever actuates the second latch when the seatback is to be pivoted, and the seatback is releasably retained in either a first generally vertical position or a second generally horizontal position, such as the seat disclosed by Balk. One would have been motivated to make such a modification in view of the suggestion in Balk that the lever of the seat cushion's latch and the seatback's latch configuration are well known in the art as a way to releasably retain seatbacks, and in view of the knowledge generally available to one skilled in the art that headrests coupled to the upper portion of seatbacks provide a rearward support for a user's head.

Claims 10, 11, and 13-15, as best understood, are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Kuroiwa et al. in view of Balk, as applied to claims 4, 8, and 9 as best understood above, and further in view of U.S. Patent No. 5,826,942 to Sutton et al.

Kuroiwa et al., as modified, discloses a seat that is basically the same as that recited in claims 10, 11, and 13-15, as best understood, except that the headrest lacks pivot movement and a third latch, as recited in the claims. Sutton et al. show a seat similar to that of Kuroiwa et al. wherein the seat has a seat cushion 14 (see Fig. 1), a seatback 16 pivotable to a horizontal position, a headrest 24 pivotable coupled to the upper portion of the seatback, a latch 88 (see Fig. 3) that may be actuated by lever 90 to releasably retain the headrest in a first extended position or a second stowed position, the headrest is biased to a stowed position via gravity and the spring 92 biasing the latch member 84 against flange 64 upon actuation, and the headrest is linked to the seatback via linkage such that the headrest advances toward a stowed position as the seatback is downwardly pivoted and the headrest advances toward an extended position as the seatback is upwardly pivoted. Therefore, it would have been obvious to one having ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to further modify the seat of Kuroiwa et al. such that the headrest is releasably retained in at least one position by a third latch, the third latch may be actuated by a third lever to release the third latch allowing the headrest to be pivoted, the headrest is releasably retained in either a first extended position aligned with the seatback or a second stowed position perpendicular to the seatback, the headrest is biased toward the stowed

position, and the headrest is linked to the seatback such that the headrest pivotably advances toward a stowed position as the seatback is downwardly pivoted and the headrest pivotably advances toward an extended position as the seatback is upwardly pivoted wherein a passenger would be deterred from utilizing the seat when the headrest is not in the extended position, and the seatback and headrest provide a visual indication when not in a retained position by virtue of the seatback being horizontally disposed and the headrest being rotated to the stowed position, such as the seat disclosed in Sutton et al. One would have been motivated to make such a modification in view of the suggestion in Sutton et al. that the horizontal seatback provides a stored position, that the headrest configuration provides an independently adjustable headrest that is controllably adjustable between an upright use position and a flat stowed position for facilitating the folding of the seatback, and that the headrest and seatback being linked provides releasing the seatback to move to the stored position upon movement of the headrest's latch.

Response to Arguments

Applicant's arguments with respect to claims 1-4, 6-15, and 20 have been considered but are moot in view of the new ground(s) of rejection.

Conclusion

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Joseph F. Edell whose telephone number is (571) 272-6858. The examiner can normally be reached on Mon.-Fri. 8:30am-5:00pm.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).

/Joseph F Edell/
Primary Examiner, Art Unit 3636
June 15, 2009